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The Column and Carousel

2 new New York City papers struggle for acceptability

By Newton H. Fulbright

1968 began with exciting talk about a major new afternoon newspaper in New York City.

The *Times* and the *News* had been in rehearsal for an afternoon newspaper. But the *Times* dismissed the idea, and finally the *News* management decided that New York City, under present conditions, was not the place to spend millions to establish a new competitor for the *Post*, now alone as a citywide p.m. daily.

Time looks around

Then Time Inc., publishers of *Time*, *Life* and other magazines—with money and a confessed interest in newspapers—was also rumored to be interested in a New York afternoon newspaper. Otto Fuerbringer, managing editor at Time since 1960, was made chief of a new division in May and placed in charge of "the acquisition and development of newspapers."

Asked for a comment on developments this week, Fuerbringer said Time was still interested in buying or founding a newspaper, but was not interested in one in New York City.

"Seldom a day goes by," he said, "when somebody doesn't ask me if we have bought a newspaper yet, usually in New York City. We are not interested in New York City. There was a time this past year when we were interested in the *Newark* (N. J.) *News*, but that deal fell through. We have no continuing interest in any New York metropolitan newspaper."

But this did not rule out interest elsewhere, he said, and added that Time was looking at Cincinnati. He meant the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. He had in mind a court order which directs the E. W. Scripps Co., owners of the *Post & Times-Star* there, to sell its interest in the *Enquirer*.

As for New York City, all the people with the money and publishing experience have stepped out, it appears, leaving the field open to some small people, relatively speaking, and at least one daily newspaper launched in 1968 is still on the newsstands: the *New York Daily Column* and the *New York Knickerbocker*.

The *Daily Column*, started April 1, is published by Jerry Finklestein, public man, industrialist, and publisher

of the *New York Law Journal*, 9,000 daily, and the *Civil Service Leader*, 160,000 weekly among government job-holders. Finklestein and his associates began talking about their daily afternoon paper when a rival group began publishing last February 28. Theirs was the weekly *Knickerbocker*.

The *Knickerbocker*, a tabloid featuring 63 comics and syndicated specials, began with a press run of 350,000 copies. The hopeful idea was that New Yorkers would go for a publication that would give them the features they once enjoyed in their favorite newspaper. At least this was the expressed thought of the publishers, Frank J. Keller, Mac Gache and Joseph L. Morse, partners in the firm that published the *Funk & Wagnalls Encyclopedia*.

Around 57,000

But by time the *Daily Column* hit the streets, with a similar idea that New Yorkers would love a publication that gave them the columns of Walter Winchell, Bob Considine, Victor Riesel, David Lawrence, Robert S. Allen, Paul Scott and others, the *Knickerbocker* was in trouble, chiefly from lack of advertising. By July 7 the *Column* had taken over the *Knickerbocker*, and since then has published six days a week, adding a weekend issue. Circulation, according to Theodore Feit, executive vice-president, is about 57,000.

Feit's comment on the future of the combined *Column* and *Knickerbocker* is, "Well, we're still on the stands."

The big problem in 1969, he added, was to capture more advertising, which should come easier this year.

"The first year is the hardest," he said. "You have to gain acceptability. We started with an idea, and have managed to stay in business by using our heads. I mean, we know what we can do and what we can't do. One of the big problems the *Knickerbocker* had was printing in Buffalo. When we took over we moved all the works out to our *Column* office in the plant of the Thal Press Inc., at Lynbrook, Long Island. We've encountered problems, but we have tried to add problems."

"But the big thing, the big problem, is getting yourself accepted. That's the hardest part of any publishing venture. The *Village Voice* (a tabloid weekly written for the city's Greenwich Village mod groupings) struggled along for three years before it caught on, and now it is doing all right. We hope to do the same."

'For women only'

As Feit was expressing his views on the future of newspapers publishing in New York City, another paper was born, this one a tabloid weekly—*Carousel*. Billed "for women only" by its publisher, Fred Ames, *Carousel* had first appeared in early October with a dummy issue for advertisers. Its official first issue, aimed at some 300,000 middle and upper middle income New Yorkers, came out December 22, and was slugged "Vol. 1, No. 1." It contained 24 pages and was priced at 25 cents a copy.

"We feel we are on the road to a publishing success in 1969," said Ames, who formerly published a community newspaper in the upper Manhattan area, Washington Heights.

"We've had our problems, you can't begin to imagine how many," Ames added. His biggest problem, he said, was trying to get the paper in the hands of readers. He felt he licked this, however, when he signed a contract with Home Delivery Inc. to place the paper every Sunday morning in 40,000 Manhattan homes, 60,000 in Westchester, 90,000 in Northern New Jersey, 60,000 in Nassau and Suffolk Counties on Long Island, and 10,000 in Queens.

Ames said he had signed a contract with Home Delivery for 12 issues, which would include delivering 40,000 copies a week to newsstands.

"This gives us a total initial circulation of 300,000 copies," Ames said, "and that's a lot of newspapers, most of them in the best homes in the metropolitan area. With that to offer, we feel we can't help but attract advertising."

Strong on distaff side

Another thing in his favor, Ames thought, was the type and quality of the paper. "This is the first time any-

in recent years, *Women's Wear Daily* of the Fairchild business group has been successful in capturing readership among women outside the fashion and retail trades.

The front page of the December 22 issue of *Carousel* featured a picture of actress Katherine Hepburn—"Woman of the week—Katie." The lead story, headed "A Bouquet for Julie," paid tribute to the daughter of President-elect Richard M. Nixon for "her very own decision to marry David Eisenhower at a private wedding ceremony before the family moves into the White House."

A story about *Carousel*, opened with an observation that the *New York Times* had taken note of the new publication. The story continued:

"Ever since newspapers were conceived, they have made more or less feeble efforts to please the distaff side with a woman's page or two, or merely scattered items buried and lost in editions which often run to 440 pages. As a result, many women have given up the whole struggle to absorb the contents of a newspaper, as openly evidenced by the woman subway rider, and they have invariably stereotyped—with some justice—the dailies as edited chiefly for men. Most wives and many career women, as a result, have depended upon their husbands and friends, or a swift dash of Instant News for tv, to provide the information and reading stimulation they would naturally like to have."

"And so... CAROUSEL. The very first women's newspaper; an assertion which was checked out with the American Newspaper Publishers Association by the *Times* writer and found to be literally the truth. You see, there is indisputably something new under the sun, after all!"

For good things in life

The editor of *Carousel* is Frederic A. Birmingham, a freelance writer and former magazine editor. The first edition carried signed stories by Nancy W. McCarthy (fashions), Joanne Andrews (fashions), Elaine Shepard from Vietnam (including a letter to David Eisenhower), Linda Shepard, Susan Miller, Joan Hanauer, and Lucy Ames, wife of the publisher. Features included the

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